

How tall the tower?

Selectmen support
wind turbine bylaw

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The alternative energy committee laid out the next step in its plan to bring a little wind power to town. But at least one resident didn't think they were being ambitious enough.

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Hill golf course.**

Committee Chairman Frank Duggan told selectmen at Monday night's meeting that having undergone an assessment of potential wind turbine sites, the next step is to seek an \$85,000 grant to determine whether the chosen site is feasible. This would involve putting up a tower that would measure the wind in that area. The committee is currently looking at a location somewhere in the vicinity of the North Hill golf course.

If the committee gets the grant, Duggan said, the evaluation process would take about 21 months.

While the town waits to see how much the wind blows, the committee plans to present a bylaw to town meeting that would set the rules for permitting a wind turbine in Duxbury. The bylaw, which is 10 pages long, calls for a maximum tower height of 250 feet.

The tower height is measured from the ground to the top of the turbine blade. According to the committee reported, it could provide 29 percent of Duxbury's municipal power needs.

One resident, Soren Jensen, thinks that's not tall enough for an effective tower.

"You don't really know the height," until the assessment is finished, he said, arguing that the article should wait, noting that Kingston held off on passing a wind turbine bylaw until it was sure about the best height for a tower.

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The decision to limit the height was based on meetings with the zoning board and public input, replied Duggan. "We decided to walk before we run."

"Putting in an enormous number tends to scare people," said committee member Andre Martecchini, who suggested that, if a taller tower is needed, the bylaw could be changed later.

"Once the study is done, people can be convinced if the study shows it," he said.

Selectman Jon Witten was skeptical, noting that changing the bylaw would require a 2/3 vote, while Jensen questioned the need to have a specific height in the first place, noting that a taller tower could provide more energy.

In the end, selectmen voted to support the article.